AN

EXPOSITION

ON

The Fourth CHAPTER

OF THE

Epiſtle to the ROMANS:

Occaſioned from the Growth of

Grotian Errors,

AND THE

Profane Practice of them who abuſe that moſt Comforting and Sanctifying Doctrine

OF

JUSTIFICATION.

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ROMANS IV. 1.

What ſhall we ſay then, that Abraham *our Father, as pertaining to the fleſh hath found?*

THeſe Words contain a New Argument for the Excluding of Works from any Cauſal Intereſt in our Juſtification: The former Argument may be reduced under this form, Tranſgreſſors of the Law cannot be Juſtified by the Law, but all Men are Tranſgreſſors of the Law, therefore no Man can be Juſtified by the Law. The Hypotheſis of the Argument is, That all Men have a Law, which the Apoſtle left not without Proof, *Rom.* 1. 19. *Rom.* 2. 14. 17. This ſecond Argument for Confirming and Illuſtrating the former is taken from the Inſtance of *Abraham* thus, What way *Abraham* was juſtified, that way all that are Saved are Juſtified; but *Abraham* was Ju-Juſtified without Works, *Ergo*. The Words may be ſumm'd up in theſe three Propoſitions. *Firſt*, The Hypotheſis or Supposition, *What way* Abraham *was Juſtified, that way others are.* The *Second* is the Propoſition, *Abraham found nothing as to the Fleſh, or was not Juſtified by Works.* The *Third* is the Proof, which contains four Mediums. (1.) *Abraham*'s having nothing to Glory in before God, *v.* 2. (2.) *Abraham*'s Faith was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs, *v.* 3. (3.) He was Juſtified of Grace, not of Debt, *v.* 4. (4.) He was Ungodly when juſtified, *v.* 5.

Firſt, For the Hypotheſis, that *What way* Abraham *was Juſtified, that way all are*, is a Doctrine little believed by many who think to go to Heaven a ſhorter way than our Fathers, that the Scriptures have ſet down for Patterns to us. *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſaith, that the *Jews* were Juſtified by the Law, and the *Gentiles* by Philoſophy. The Libertines profeſs different ways of Juſtification, and form in their Imagination different ways to

Heaven, one for the Gentiles, another for the Jews, and a third for the Chriſtians: And it is a too common Error, that every Man may be Saved in his own way if he be ſerious: There is ſomewhat to be yielded to this ſaying, when the different way is only about External Rites of Worſhip; for the Jews had one way, and Chriſtians have another: Or when it is about Church-Government or Diſcipline: Or Thirdly, about Problematical Opinions, for the Weak are to be received without entangling them with Doubtful Diſputations. And we read of many that build Hay and Stubble upon a true Foundation; but the way of Juſtification is only One: For, (1.) There is but one Judge, who is not only one in his Eſſence, but perpetually of one Mind, and not like other Judges, who may act variouſly, according to their Humour. (2.) The Condition of the Perſons to be Judged the ſame, all Tranſgreſſors, *Rom.* 3. 23. (3.) The Mediator is one, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *No other Name given under Heaven by which Men can be ſaved.* (4.) One Meritorious Cauſe, the Blood of Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 9. *Juſtified by his Blood.* (5.) One Covenant of Grace, for it is Everlaſting, 2 *Sam.* 23. (6.) One Condition, Faith, *Heb.* 11. The Nature of it one among all the Patterns of it. *Eph.* 4. 4. There is but *One Body, One Spirit, One Faith, One Lord, One Baptiſm, One Hope of Calling:* This Oneneſs makes the Way of Salvation One. To be Juſtified by Faith is a ſpecifical Attribute, and tho' aſſerted of an Individual, it doth not agree to him as an Individual. So any Example of one that we are ſure was Sav'd, was an Argument of force: But the Example of *Abraham* was of greater Force than of any other common Inſtance, both in reſpect of the Jews, and in reſpect of the thing it ſelf. (1.) With reſpect of the Jews, they eſteemed *Abraham* the happieſt Man in the World, for they called Heaven *Abraham's Boſom, Luk.* 16. 23. and the Holieſt Man in the World, for they reckoned his Seed to be without Original Sin, for by being *Abraham's* Seed they eſteemed themſelves all the Children of God, *Joh.* 8. 33, 41. and that the worſt and vileſt Sinner among them ſhould at laſt go to Heaven: Hence they Object to Chriſt, *Are there few that ſhall be ſaved?* Luk. 13. 23. For they thought all the Seed of *Abraham* muſt be ſaved, and to ſolve the Phœnomenon of One impenitent to the very Death, they were the firſt Founders of a Purgatory. But (2.) *Abraham's* real Priviledges and Properties in this very Affair

Affair makes his exemplarineſs of greater force than Ordinary. 1. Comparatively, with reſpect to any Competitors. *Adam* or *Noah* are the only two could be pitched on, as Fathers of the World, but the Scripture Caſts the Ballance on *Abraham*'s ſide, *ver.* 11. that he might be *Father of all them that believed*, though not of *the Circumciſion*; Ver. 16. *Father of us all:* Ver. 17. *Father of many Nations.* *Adam* and *Noah* were Natural Heads, the one to all Mankind, the other to all ſince the Flood: Had they been Conſtituted Moral Heads or Patterns, the whole World had fallen into the ſame Error as *Abraham*'s Natural Seed did, to think that Gracious Priviledges deſcended through the Fleſh. *Secondly*, *Adam* and *Noah* were Heads of more Univerſal Covenants; *Adam* of the Covenant of Works, which was by him broken and Violated: Hence is he become the Head of Apoſtacy, and therefore not fit to be made the Father of a Covenant of Reconciliation. We needed one greater than any meer Man, ſuch is the ſecond *Adam*, to be Head of that, in oppoſition to him, as we may ſee, *Rom.* 5. 1 *Cor.* 15. *Noah* was the Head of a gracious Covenant, but the Grace it promiſed was Common, that the World ſhould never be Deluged; that Day and Night, Seed-time and Harveſt ſhould continue. 2. Poſitively, One of *Abraham*'s Priviledges was, that to him firſt after there were Numerous Families on the Earth, the Promiſe of Chriſt as a Seed was made, *Galat.* 3. 16. *To thy Seed, which is Chriſt.* Hence all Promiſes belong to *Abraham*'s Seed, ſince Chriſt is it, or in it, for all Promiſes belong primitively to the Covenant of Redemption that was made with him. (2.) *Abraham* was a Pattern among all Nations from *Babylon* to *Egypt*, the then Peopled World, ſuch as ſcarce had any Parallel ſince, *Iſaiah* 41. 2. He is called a *Righteous Man raiſed up from the Eaſt*, One *Called to the Foot of God:* He believed againſt the ſtrength of Nature for a Son, and he Obeyed againſt the Laws of Nature in a Willingneſs to Sacrifice that Son. (3.) He was the firſt with whom the Covenant of Grace was compleatly drawn up into a Covenant; before that it only bore the Name of a Promiſe, but ſince *Abraham* it hath born the Name of a Covenant, *Galat.* 3. 17. the Condition of it being expreſſed, *viz.* Faith, which was never mentioned before, and Seals appendant to it, *viz.* Circumciſion. (4.) He ſtood as a Repreſentative Father to all the Church, in tranſacting their Covenant with God, and alſo

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at *Melchiſedeck*'s Feaſt, which was an Earneſt of the Lord's Supper, wherein Chriſt Feaſts us Symbolically with Bread and Wine, and it's probable that his being ſet up as Head of the Covenant tranſacted with Chriſt, is the Reaſon why he is never Named as a Type of Chriſt. (5.) To him firſt was the Promiſe of a World to come made; all the Patriarchs before lived Tenants at Will, but what the Goſpel at large declares of a New State of the Creation, *Rom.* 8. 21. 2 *Pet.* 3. the Purport of which ſeems to be, that as this Earth is ſuited to our Bodies now in Uſe and Service, ſo it ſhall after their glorification. Now the firſt Promiſe of this World was made to *Abraham*, Ver. 13. the Promiſe that he ſhould be the Heir of the World. (6.) The Myſtical Divinity begun with him in the Preludial Types of Chriſt and his Church; as Circumciſion a Type of Sanctification, *Canaan* a Type of the World to come; for we read not of any other World promiſed to *Abraham* in the Book of *Geneſis*, yet *Heb.* 11. theſe believing Patriarchs looked for a better Countrey from the Promiſe of it. *Melchiſedeck* was ſo famous a Type that the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpends Chapters in the Explication of it: And ſo *David*, 110th. *Pſalm*; yea, *Abraham*'s reducing of Captivated *Sodom* from the Eaſtern Kings, *Gen.* 14. is a Type of *Sodom*'s Reſtauration in the latter days, *Ezek.* 16. 53. *When I ſhall bring again their Captivity, the Captivity of* Sodom *and her Daughters.* *Abraham*'s Natural Seed are a Type of his Exemplary Seed: *Abraham*'s Sacrifice of the four Beaſts, with the ſmoaking Furnace and burning Lamp paſſing between them, looks like the Original of that Typical Emblem of the four Cherubims, with the Furnace of the Law and the Lamp of the Goſpel in the middle of 'em, as was in *Solomon*'s Temple, *Ezek.* 1. *Rev.* 4. (7.) Myſtical Times take their Beginning with him alſo; and its reaſonable that the *Æra*'s ſhould be ſuitable to the things Calculated in it, that if the one be ſignificant, the other ſhould not be altogether ſilent, and that *Abrahams* Covenant ſhould not be a Bond without an appointed day of payment. *Gen.* 14. we find the firſt mention of Tenth or Tithe: The great Reaſons that ſome bring for the Natural Right to Tithes, are, (1.) Becauſe they were before the Miſtical or Ceremonious Age, which is not ſo, for it began with them. (2.) Becauſe of No Myſtical Signification, and therefore all its Goodneſs and Uſe is in its own abſolute Nature: But it is commonly acknowledged that *Ten*

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is a Miſtical Number as well as *Seven*, and the way of explaining Miſtical Numbers is to put a Day for a Year, *Ezek.* 4. If we Multiply the Days of Ten Years, putting a Day for a Year, the ſumm is 3650, which ſumm from *Abraham*'s Victory to this Day wants about 30 Years ſtill to be Compleated; that which renders the Explication probable is, that ſince a World was Promiſed to *Abraham* and his Seed at ſo great a diſtance, there ſhould be ſome Intimation of the time of Poſſeſſion. A (2*d.*) Reaſon, Becauſe there was juſt Ten Years between the Promiſe of *Canaan*, the Type of that World, and the peaceable Poſſeſſion of it at this Triumph and Victory over the King of *Babylon* with the reſt. Moreover the Vintage and Harveſt mentioned in the *Revelations* are the latter end of ſome Miſtical Year, which doth well Coincide with this great one at the Spring whereof *Abraham* lived. I may add its harmonizing with the other Myſtical Numbers, as the great Myſtical Appointed Time of the Churches Suffering.

I come now to the Theſis or Poſition, which may be treated of under theſe four Heads.

1. The Grammatical Syntax of the Words. 2. The Logical Senſe of them. 3. The Rhetorical Enlargement about them. 4. The explicatory Repetition of them. As to the *Firſt*, The Grammatical Syntax of the Words, the Queſtion is, Whether *as pertaining to the Fleſh*, is to be Conſtrued with *Father*, or with *find?* Whether the Senſe is, *What hath* Abraham *our Father in the fleſh found*, Or, *What hath* Abraham *our Father found in the fleſh?* The former wants not Authorities, *Origen*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Eraſmus*, *Buser*, *Peter Martyr* and *Calvin*; but the latter has greater Authority than they: The common Conſent of the Original *Greek*, in which it was firſt wrote, and the *Syriac*, in which it was firſt ſpoke, which ſo Interprets it, What has he *found* or *gotten* in the Fleſh? Or as the *Arabick*, What has he *obtained* by the Works of the Fleſh? 2. The Votes of Divines, Ancient or Modern, are more than the latter. 3. The Words cannot be ſo conſtrued without an Hyperbaton, which is a very rough Figure and Vice in Speech, it being placed in Order after *find.* Our Tranſlation doth not obſerve the Order of the *Greek*, that they may accommodate their Tranſlation to either Sence; for the *Greek* hath it thus,

What then ſhall we ſay, has Abraham *our Father found it, or attained it by the Fleſh?*

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4. The Sence of the Words and Design of the Context carries it thus, for neither the Apostles nor *Jews* did question his finding Righteousness, finding or obtaining a Remission or Justification; but what way he obtained it, whether by the Works of the Flesh or by Faith. 5. Except it were Construed thus, there would be nothing in the Thesis to answer Proof. The Nature of Arguments is to prove that he was Justified by Faith, and Justified Graciously, and Justified when Ungodly, therefore it is the manner of Justification that is in the Thesis or Proposition.

Secondly, The second thing is the Logical Sence of the Proposition, to find according to the Flesh, which cannot be known without searching into the signification of both Terms, *finding* and *flesh*. As to the First, *finding*, it either signifies the attaining a thing in common any way, or some times more particularly the first Invention of a thing, as *Rom.* 1. *Inventers of evil things*. (3.) Unlook'd for Gain is call'd εὑρήμα, so *Luk.* 1. 13. εὗρες χάριν, to find Grace; and in the *Hebrew* מָצָא חֵן. (4.) To Merit or Deserve a thing, so *Beda* Expounds it, and *Ambrose* translates the very place *meritum esse*: Whichsoever way it be taken, the Sense is plain that *Abraham* by the Flesh (1.) Could not Invent nor Contrive a Method of Saving Sinners; it was the Glory of Infinite Wisdom to find out a way of God's being Just, and yet a Justifier of the Ungodly. (2.) *Abraham* could not discover nor reveal it after Invented, for *No Man hath seen God at any time*; the only Word that *was in the Bosom of the Father, he hath reveal'd him*: All the Prophets before Christ lighted their Tapers at his Light. (3.) Nor could he so much as understand it after reveal'd, *Mat.* 16. 17. *Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee: I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and revealed them unto Babes.* (4.) Nor could he perform it after known, for though Christ needed Flesh to suffer in, yet had the Sufferings of his Flesh been by it self, it would never have been of a Value or Dignity to purchase our Peace, for Flesh is a term of Weakness and Diminution in Scripture, *Isa.* 40. *All flesh is grass*: Isa. 31. 3. *Their Horse is Flesh and not Spirit*: Mark 14. 38. *The Spirit is willing but the Flesh is weak*: Rom. 8. 3. *The Law was weak through the flesh*: And Christ asserts it of his own sinless Flesh, that *the Flesh profiteth nothing*, John 6. 63. So neither could Flesh do nor suffer

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to Appeaſe Divine Wrath, to ſatisfie the Law, or to be a Plea before Exact Juſtice for our Juſtification. (5.) Nor can he apply it when a ſufficient Plea is wrought, for Faith our receiving Act is the Gift of God. (6.) Nor can we by the Fleſh prepare and make our ſelves fit for Communion with God, for the Preparation of the Heart is from him; He takes away the *Stony Heart* and gives a *Heart of Fleſh*, he makes us meet to be *Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. Nor *Laſtly*, Can he Compleat or Perfect the Work when begun, for he that *begins* a good Work *perfects* it to the day of Chriſt. It is God that Anoints and alſo Eſtabliſheth and Seals; He that Calls is the ſame that perfects, ſtrengthens and ſettles. Phil. 1.6. 2 Cor. 1.20 1 Pet. 5.10

The *Second* Term to be Explain'd is *Fleſh*, by which I Conceive is underſtood the Principles of humane Actions, however highly advanced in this Life, the two Fundamentals of the Phariſaical Doctrine, as *Simeon Juſtus* their pretended Father ſaith, *That the World was built upon, was the Law and Free-will, the one an External, the other an Internal Principle.* The chief Reaſon why the *Phariſees* thought *Pagans* could not be Sav'd, was for want of that External, which they ſay God gave themſelves as an Occaſion of Merit; for they ſay, *Whoever performs any one of the 613 Precepts of the Law, merits thereby Everlaſting Life.* As for Man's Fall, they look on it rather as his Riſe, and putting him in a Condition God-like to get Heaven by way of Reward, and not beggarly as before, to have it of meer Mercy and Gift. Theſe Principles the Apoſtle calls *Fleſh*. (1.) As to the External Principle, the Apoſtle calls it *Fleſh*, *Gal.* 3. *Having begun in the Spirit, can ye be made perfect by the Fleſh?* So *Heb.* 7. 9. they are call'd *Carnal Commandments*, and *Carnal Ordinances*; ſo the Apoſtle here denys that theſe which of themſelves are but a *dead Letter*, and *bodily Exerciſe can profit nothing*. (2.) As to the Inward Principle, Original Corruption, or the Humane Nature of Man as deprived of the Conduct of God's Spirit, is a Principle of Deviation and Sin, and is term'd *Fleſh* in Scripture,

Auguſt. de Fide & Spiritu, ſaith, *Anima dum Carnalia bona appetit Caro nominatur pars enim ejus quædam reſiſtit Spiritus non Naturâ ſed Conſuetudine Peccatorum.* Ibidem: *Nunc Anima propter Carnales appetitus Caro nominatur.*

Ambroſ. de Noe & Arcâ: *Caro Cauſa fuit corrumpendæ etiam animæ ex qua velut è fonte prorumpunt paſſionum flumina quibus demergitur anima excuſſo gubernatore remigium procellis & tempeſtatibus victum loco ſuo cedit.*

Gal. 5. 17. *Fleſh againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the Fleſh:* This cannot be all that is here meant, for neither Jew nor Gentile ever yet thought that a Man could be Juſtified by ſinfull Works, for then the ſame would be both the Matter of Condemnation and Juſtification; but it is by reaſon of the Power and Sway of this Principle in Man, that he is not able to perform any thing that is Perfect, or can abide the Teſt of Divine Juſtice, there is always ſome Defect in Meaſure or in Manner; hence Man in his beſt Eſtate in this Life is call'd *Fleſh*, and his moſt Noble Principles *Fleſhly* and *Carnal*, Coloſ. 2. 18. a *fleſhly Mind:* 2 Cor. 1. 12. *Fleſhly Wiſdom:* 1 Cor. 3. 3. They that are Converted and Babes in Chriſt, are ſaid to be *Carnal*, and *Walk as Men*: Gal. 1. *Paul* calls the Apoſtles *Fleſh and Blood*; he did not go up to *Jeruſalem* to Conſult with them. Hence the Common Signification of it in Scripture is to denote this State of Life we are in, 2 *Cor* 10. 3. *Though we walk in the fleſh:* Gal. 2. 20. *The Life which I now live in the fleſh:* 1 Cor. 15. 15. *Fleſh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven:* So that the Apoſtle's Sence is, ſo long as Fleſh is in a Man as a Principle to Unite and Mix with any other, there can no Work be produc'd by him to be a Plea or Meriting Cauſe of his Juſtification. *Adam*'s Works would have juſtified him though he was Fleſh; but there is far more neceſſary to Juſtifie a Sinner than a Righteous Man; the Condition of the Covenant of Grace as one with Redemption was ſuch, that Chriſt Jeſus tho' ſinleſs, could not perform as Fleſh, *John* 6. 63. *The fleſh profiteth nothing.* There was no need of an Incarnation, if a Carnal Creature could have been a Redeemer. *Works* and *Fleſh* are here related as Cauſe and Effect, Principle and Action, ſo as in the 2*d. Verſe* we are deny'd to be Juſtify'd by Works, in the 1*ſt. Verſe* we are deny'd to have a Principle or Power within us to produce any ſuch Work as may Juſtifie us.

It may be Objected to this, (1.) That the Soul of Man is a Spirit, and its Will and Underſtanding are the Principles of humane Action, and therefore cannot be call'd *Fleſh*, and ſo its Moral Fruits or Works be here Excepted. (2.) A Perſon that is Regenerate has yet a more Noble and Spiritual Principle within him, which is directly oppoſite to this Principle, and therefore the Works and Fruits of this muſt be Excluded. *Reſp.* (1.) Whatever the Soul of Man is ſubjectively, for the Scripture

ture tells us *Luk.* 24. 29. that *a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones*, yet by the Disorder that sin hath brought in the World it is subordinate to our bodily Appetites, and made a Slave, a Cook or a Caterer for the Flesh; hence 2 *Eph.* our Wills are called *Wills of the Flesh*, θελήματα σαρκός; and as it is subordinately and slavishly, so it is objectively Carnal; hence it is not enumerated as a Principle of this Corrupt State, 1 *John*, The *Flesh*, the *World*, and the *Devil*, are the three Principal things; the World as the Object, the Devil as the Ruler and Governour, and the Flesh as the inward efficient principle; hence is our Mind and our Wisdom not only call'd *fleshy*, but it is said *John* 3. that *all that is born of the flesh is flesh:* If it had been all that is *Conceived*, we might have thought the Soul left out, but it is all that is *Born*; it is not every Man or Person that is *born of the Flesh is Flesh*, for the denomination might have been from his Body apart, but it is every thing. (2.) The Scripture informs us that this Soul needs another more powerful Spirit to act it in order to Conquer and Overcome this Flesh: Hence in *Jude*, *Sensual*, *having not the Spirit:* And the word *Caro* is from *Careo* to want, and so does the Hebrew *Shear* signifie both *Flesh* and *Carkass*, or *Relicts*. Hence our Souls may be call'd *Flesh*, by reason of its want of this Noble Principle, without which it is but a Spiritual Carkass. (3.) This is farther evident from the Moral and Heroick Actions even of Pagans or Men that are not Converted, their needing and having a more Noble Principle than a bare Humane Soul for the Performance of them; for *John* 1. it is said, Christ is the *Light that lightens every one that comes into the World:* The very Understanding of Man is Ignorance, and his Eye is Darkness, until this Sun enlighten it. There is a great difference between what an Unconverted Man actually is, and what he deserves to be, and it is Christ that great Mediator whose Goodness is so universally influensive that only makes the difference. (2.) The Noble Thoughts and high Flights that we find in our own Spirits, *Job* tells us, that they are Flames from above, Divine Beams from the Father of Lights, darted down upon our Spirits, and not Sparks by Pains and Industry blown up out of our fallen Ashes; *There is a Spirit in Man*, saith he, *but the Inspiration of the Almighty gives him Understanding. Solomon* calls the Soul of Man *the Candle of the Lord, searching all the inward rooms of the Heart:* It is the Lord's Candle, for he hath lighted

it, before it was as a stinking Wicke. (3.) If it were Natural and Congenit, it would not be so ill entertain'd in Man, *Rom.* 2. 1. There is a *detaining*, *imprisoning* the Truth by *unrighteousness*, a putting away of Conscience and defiling it; the *Law* is *written* in it, *Rom.* 2. but often blotted out again. All these do show that Truth and Virtue in Man are Works of Divine Art, Idea's from Heaven, neither our Brethren nor Off-spring. Thus much in Answer to the first Objection, to shew that under Flesh the Spirit and Soul of Man is comprehended, and indeed what blind Pharisee could ever dream that *Abraham* could be Justified by any Works of his Body, that wanted the Conduct of Reason or Deliberation to their Performance. But the Second Objection seems of greater force, and yet hath not the Truth on its side, tho' we must yield more to it: For Man can prepare and fit himself for Heaven by this Principle, tho' not purchase a Right to it. 2 *Cor.* 10. 3. *We do not war after the flesh:* Gal. 5. 16. *Walk in the Spirit.* 2. This was a Principle the *Jews* did not own, they proudly thought that God needed only to acquaint them with his Pleasure, they had a sufficient Power within themselves to perform it: *Maim. in Halacah Teshuba. It is meet and becoming that we should Convert our selves by Repentance, and forsake all our Iniquities, forasmuch as this also is in our Power.* The *Jews* were as blind in the Doctrine of Sanctification by the Spirit of God, as they were of Justification by the Son of God. But this seems rather to fortifie the Objection, that Man after Regenerate has a Principle within him, able to produce acceptable and Meriting Works. *Resp.* 1. The *Jews* acknowledged the Loss of this Power in the days of the *Messia*; for as they dated the *Epocha* of Free-will from Man's Fall, they terminated the *Æra* of it by the Coming of the *Messia*, as we may learn from their ancient Doctors in *Bereshith Rabba*, loosing on *Cant.* 1. 2. *He kissed me with the Kisses of his Mouth.* Thus at the time of the giving of the Law the Congregation of *Israel* desir'd that *Moses* might speak to them, they not being able to hear the Words of God himself, and while he spake they heard, and hearing forgot, and thereupon moved this Debate among themselves, "What is this *Moses*, a Man of Flesh and "Blood? O that God would Kiss with the Kisses of his Mouth! that is, Teach us in a more Vital and Internal way! To which *Moses* answer'd, This could not be then, but it should come to pass in the days of the *Messia*, when the Law should be written

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in their Hearts: The like we find in *Nachmonides*, "Man shall "return in the times of the *Messia* to that Primitive State he "was in before the Sin of the first Man, who Naturally did "whatsoever was good; and as *Rabbi Beki* saith, Acted from a "Necessity of Nature, and all his Actions were nothing else but "the Issues of pure and perfect Understanding. Hence the same *Nach.* concludes, "That in the days of the *Messia* there shall "neither be Merit nor Demerit, because no Free-Will; but un-"til then Man had a Monarchical Power in him, that none "in Heaven or Earth could Controul: As *R. Sadia* says, All "things are in the Power of God, but the Fear of God." Therefore all who Confess'd the *Messia*, must Confess a Spirit of Sanctification, the Persons the Apostle writes to owning the *Messia*, must own Works from the Spirit also, *Gal.* 3. 3. 2 *Resp.* Though in Regenerate Man there is a Spiritual Principle opposite to the Flesh, yet while we live in the Flesh there is such a mixture of this fleshy Principle with it, that there is no Work produced by the one, but it is so imperfect by reason of the mixture of the other with it, that it is altogether uncapable of being a Plea in the matter of Justification, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. *Are ye not Carnal, and walk as Men?* No Man had more of this Principle in him than the Apostle *Paul*, and yet by reason of this he Complains that he is *Carnal, sold under sin*, Rom. 7. 14. Where he distinctly mentions the two Principles, the Spiritual, by which he Consented to the Law, and had a Will to do good, and as to that part delighted in the Law of God; but by reason of the other dwelling in his Flesh, he could not perform good, there was still a sinfulness in the ἀποτελέσμα; so *Gal.* 5. 17. *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* The Compleated Work is never entirely spiritual and sinless. This Principle of Flesh does not only bear an equal Share but a Victory: *Heb.* 12. 12. *Lift up the Hands that hang down, and the feeble Knees:* The Word *Flesh* is very proper to signifie this mixed Principle in Man; for not only the *Bohemick* Word *Massa*, signifies *Flesh* and a *Mixture* also, but the Greek κρεας from κρασις, a *Temperament* or *Mixture*: The first Use of the Word we read of in Scripture is to to this purpose, *They shall be one Flesh*; and it is very like that the Regenerate Spirit of Man is call'd *a fleshy Heart* on this Account, because it admits of a Mixture of the Spirit of God, while a *Stony Heart* wholly resists, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *I will take away the Stony Heart out of*

your fleſh, and will give you a Heart of Fleſh: There is nothing in Nature more Compound than Fleſh is, having the moſt ſubtile Spirits within its Muſcles, and moſt ſolid parts in its Fibres, with the moſt liquid in the Blood: Hence the whole Humane Nature that is a Compounded Compend of all Creatures is call'd *Fleſh*: So that the Spirit of Man advanced with the Spirit of Regeneration while in this Life, may properly be call'd a Principle of Fleſh, for what elſe is a Heart of Fleſh? So much for the Logical Senſe of the Propoſition, which muſt be held by all as a Truth in it ſelf, except the *Quakers*, who maintain a Sinleſs Perfection uſually attainable in this Life.

The *Third* Head is the Rhetorical or Emphatical way of Aſſerting it, *What ſhall we ſay then?* In which there are theſe Four things Conſiderable, (1.) In General, The Connection with the former Words. (2.) In Particular, An Illation or Inference from them, *Then.* (3.) An Interrogation, *What?* (4.) A Communication, *What ſhall we ſay?*

Firſt, As to the Connection in general: Though the Stile of the Scripture is divinely Royal, *Acts* 2. 4. the Apoſtles ſpoke *as the Spirit gave them* to ſpeak, and ſo is not ty'd pedantically or ſervilely to the Limits of Humane Art, whether Grammar, Rhetorick, or Logick, but in a more looſe, majeſtick and prudent Method, condeſcending ſometimes to Vulgar Speech, ſometimes as Occaſion ſerved in preſent Circumſtances, ſometimes anſwering Objections, ſometimes obviating them, and carrying different and ſubordinate ends before it at once; as here, the equality of the *Gentiles* to the *Jews* in the Point of Juſtification, it is both uſed as a Medium, and as an End ſubordinate to the other, that Men are Juſtified by Faith without Works: Yet, (2.) The Condenſed troops of Connexive, Illative, Cauſal Particles that are in this very Chapter made uſe of by ſcores, ſhews plainly that this Scripture is moſt Argumentative; and as *Origen* ſays, he does not diſpute here without Logick, but writes as if he were in one School of *Tyrannus*: And *Beza* obſerves ſuch Accurateneſs, that the like he hath not ſeen in the Books of any Profane Author, who moſt artificially and morofely have followed the Precepts of Art. He that is an Enemy to Reaſon is an Enemy to Religion, for the Exerciſe of it is a *Reaſonable Service*, and Reaſon is the Root it is engrafted upon, and Logick is only an Artificial Cultivation of it. *Veronius* the Jeſuit aſſerts as fooliſhly as falſly, that the Scripture does not draw one Conſequence from any Principle

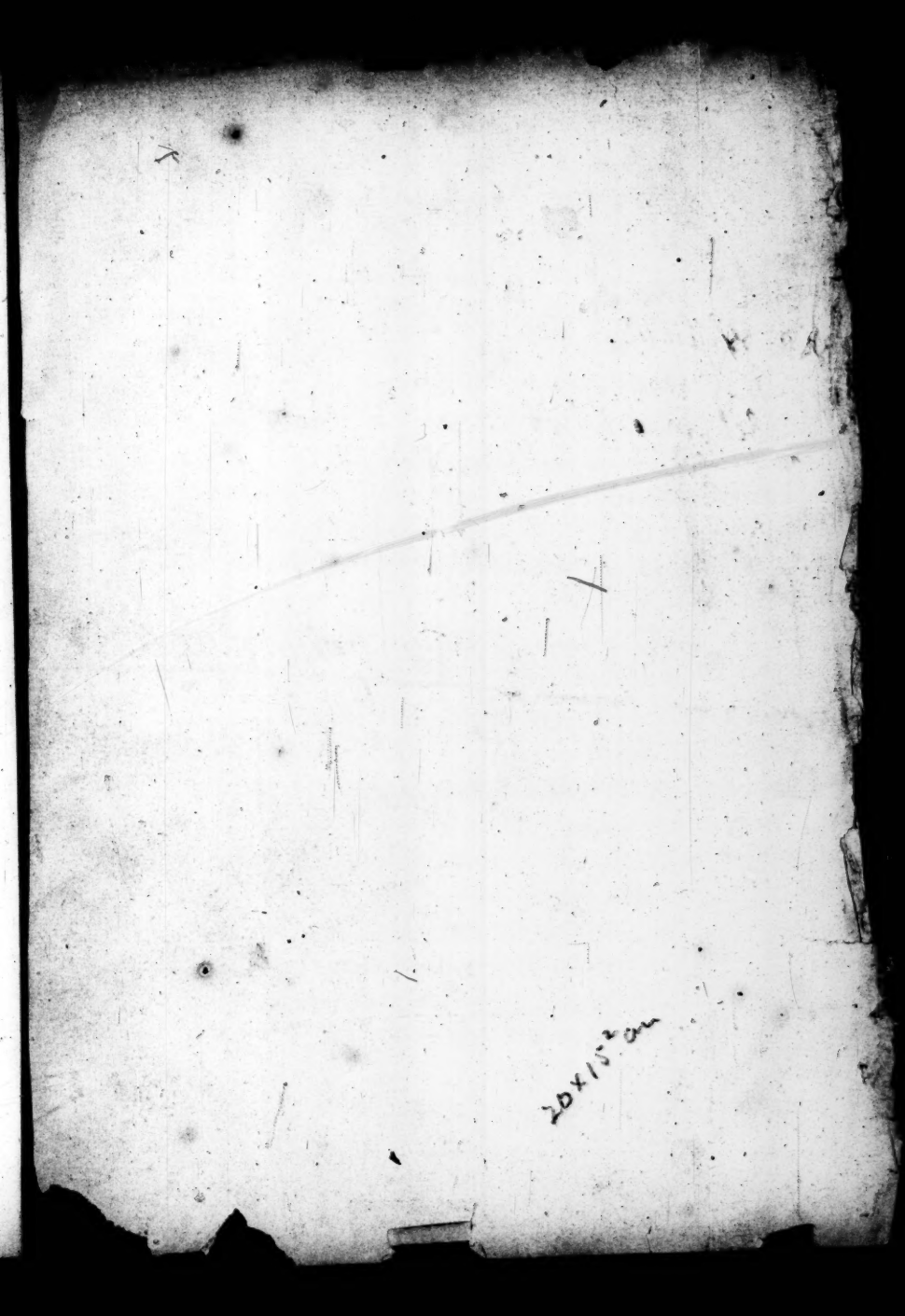
Principle of Reason; when nothing can be more evident than the Apostle's digesting his several Topicks, and forming several kinds of Syllogisms in this very Chapter. (3.) It is Observable, that the Chapters and Verses do not always stop the Connection of Sence, or Tenour of the Discourse; for sometimes the Chapter makes a Breach where the Sence will not allow a Punctum, as *Isaiah* 8. last *v.* ends thus, *and they shall be driven to darkness*; the 9*th.* Chapter begins thus, *Nevertheless the darkness shall not be such as in the days of her Vexation:* So *Colos.* the 1*st. v.* of the 4*th.* Chapter belongs entirely to the 3*d.* These four things are worthy Common Knowledge about Chapters and Verses. (1.) That they are not of Divine Authority. (2.) That they are not very Old. (3.) That they are not in all Bibles alike. (4.) That the *Jews*, as *Maimonides*, hath attempted their Amendment in the Hebrew Bible; *Sixtus Quintus* among the Papists, their Bible; and *Junius* and *Tremellius* among the Protestants. Tho' the Particles in this 1*st. v.* shews a Necessary Connection with the former, yet the Breach made by the Chapter is no way Vitious, because of the Newness and Distinctness of the Topick from what went before. The Fourth and Last Observable thing in the Connection is, the Manner of this Coherence or Connection with the former. (1.) Some think it relates to the 23*d.* V. that *the Righteousness of God without the Law is witness'd to by the Law and the Prophets: Abraham* being a Proof from the Law, and *David* from the Prophets. (2.) *Aquinas* thinks he is Undermining the Pillars of the *Jews* false Hopes, the Law in the 3*d.* Ch. and Circumcision in the 4*th.* Ch. (3.) Others, that in the former Chapter *Paul* did exclude Works without Faith or before Faith, in this Chapter he excludes Works with Faith or after Faith, such were *Abraham*'s and *David*'s. (4.) Some from *v.* 29. if the same God of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and the same their Condition, What doth *Abraham*'s Priviledges that were but *Flesh* profit to Justification? (5.) Thus the former contain'd an Argument against Works having any Interest in Justification, from Reason; this contains an Argument from Example, the most pretendable by the *Jews* that the Bible could afford. (6.) Thus he had propos'd the *Gospel* as his only Charge and Work he was call'd to, which he describes to contain the History of Christ and his Righteousness apprehended by Faith, as the only way of Salvation, to *v.* 20. Ch. 1. 2*ly.* He excludes the Law as an impossible way of saving Man, from *Ch.* 1. *v.* 20. to this 4*th.* Chapter. 3*ly.* In this

this he begins by Inſtances to prove thoſe that liv'd under the Law were ſav'd by the Goſpel. Thus much for the Connection in general; ſome think that *νν, then,* ſignifies no more, as *Anſelm, Aquinas, Eſtius,* &c.

The *Second* thing Emphatical, is this Illation or Inference which the Particle *then* does expreſs; for there is no cogent Reaſon why we ſhould decline its uſual ſignification, eſpecially when this Chapter is in it ſelf a Corollary or Concluſion from the former general Doctrine: For if no Fleſh be juſtified by the Works of the Law, what can we ſay for *Abraham* or *David* according to the Fleſh? In which Concluſion he either prevents or anſwers the *Jews* Objection, who might in their Opinion have excepted ſuch as *Abraham* or *David* out of the general Lot of Mankind. Hence this Text is both a Concluſion to what goes before, and a Propoſition to what follows.

The *Third* thing is the Interrogation, *What ſhall we ſay?* which imports a ſtrong and Emphatical Negation, for that is the uſe of Interrogatives; that if they be Negative they affirm, and Affirmatives deny more ſtrongly; and with the denyal leaves it a ſtanding Queſtion to *Jews* and *Gentiles* who then were, *Pelagians* and *Papiſts* who were to ſucceed, what they could anſwer to it. For ſince he had proved it by demonſtration, that every man was a Tranſgreſſor of the Law, how could they be Juſtified by it? Some Interpreters double the Queſtion thus, *What ſhall we ſay?* Or thus, *What ſhall we ſay of our Father Abraham? Shall we ſay, that he hath found any thing as to the Fleſh?* But moſt Books and Authors have only one, and may be in the Sacred Original there was none at all, according to the Rabbinical Proverb, *En mukedam umeuther betora: No ſtops in the Law.*

The *Fourth* and laſt thing is the Communication, *What ſhall we ſay?* He enrolls himſelf in the Number of the *Jews* or Objectors, partly to prevent Offence, partly to gain their good will: It is as much as if he ſaid, "I am of the ſeed of *Abra-*
"*ham* as well as you, it concerns my Honour as much as yours
"to maintain his Priviledges, and I will ſay for him as much
"as I can; but what can I ſay in anſwer to the former Argu-
"ment, or what can you ſay when we have united our force?
"We cannot ſay his Free-will, endu'd with Inward Gifts, or
"aſſiſted with the External Advantage of the Law, could do
"any thing to merit or obtain Divine Favour, tho' he was (as
"the *Syriack* in the Text has it) *Roſhe dabaatha, Prince of the Fa-*
"*thers.* Thus much for the Firſt *Verſe.*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